

LISTING OF CLAIMS

This claim listing replaces all previous versions of the claims.

1-20. (Canceled)

21. (New) A method comprising:

receiving a first signal from a local device;

converting the first signal to a first network port packet data signal to emulate a local data signal port on a network data signal port with respect to the local device;

transmitting the first network port packet data signal to a first remote device over a network connection;

receiving a second network port packet data signal from the first remote device over the network connection, the second network port packet data signal including a busy signal indicating the first remote device is busy and an address of a second remote device on the network connection, the first remote device to service the second remote device;

converting the second network port packet data signal to a second signal to emulate the local data signal port with respect to the local device;

transmitting the second signal to the local device;

transmitting a third network port packet data signal to the second remote device to request status information of the first remote device; and

receiving a fourth network port packet data signal from the second remote device including status information of the first remote device.

22. (New) The method of claim 21, further comprising:

receiving a fifth port packet data signal from the second remote device while receiving the second network port packet data signal from the first remote device; and

sending a sixth network port packet data signal to the second remote device including a busy signal and an address of the first remote device on the network connection.

23. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein receiving the first signal comprises receiving a command signal to generate a local port pin data signal.

24. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein receiving the first signal comprises receiving a local port pin data signal.

25. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the status information of the first remote device includes one or more of a busy status, an ink level, a paper level, a print head temperature, and a toner level.

26. (New) An apparatus comprising:

a first port to receive a first signal from a local device;

a plurality of circuit components coupled to the first port to convert the first signal to a first network port packet data signal to emulate a local data signal port on the first port;

a second port to transmit the first network port packet data signal to a first remote device over a network connection accessible to the second port;

a third port to receive a second network port packet data signal from the first remote device over the network connection, the second network port packet data signal including a busy signal indicating the first remote device is busy and an address of a second remote device on the network connection, the first remote device to service the second remote device;

the plurality of circuit components to further convert the second network port packet data signal to a second signal to emulate the local data signal port;

a fourth port to transmit the second signal to the local device;

a fifth port to transmit a third network port packet data signal to the second remote device to request status information of the first remote device; and

a sixth port to receive a fourth network port packet data signal from the second remote device including status information of the first remote device.

27. (New) The apparatus of claim 26, further comprising:

the sixth port to receive a fifth port packet data signal from the second remote device while receiving the second network port packet data signal from the first remote device; and

the fifth port to transmit a sixth network port packet data signal to the second remote device including a busy signal and an address of the first remote device on the network connection.

28. (New) The apparatus of claim 26, wherein a first port to receive a first signal from a local device comprises the first port to receive a local port pin data signal.

29. (New) The apparatus of claim 26, wherein the status information of the first remote device includes one or more of a busy status, an ink level, a paper level, a print head temperature, and a toner level.

30. (New) An article of manufacture comprising a storage medium having stored therein a plurality of instructions that are machine executable, wherein when executed, cause the machine to perform operations, including:

receiving a first signal from a local device;

converting the first signal to a first network port packet data signal to emulate a local data signal port on a network data signal port with respect to the local device;

transmitting the first network port packet data signal to a first remote device over a network connection;

receiving a second network port packet data signal from the first remote device over the network connection, the second network port packet data signal including a busy signal indicating the first remote device is busy and an address of a second remote device on the network connection, the first remote device to service the second remote device;

converting the second network port packet data signal to a second signal to emulate the local data signal port with respect to the local device;

transmitting the second signal to the local device;

transmitting a third network port packet data signal to the second remote device to request status information of the first remote device; and

receiving a fourth network port packet data signal from the second remote device including status information of the first remote device.

31. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 30, the storage medium further comprising instructions, wherein when executed, cause the machine to perform operations including:

receiving a fifth port packet data signal from the second remote device while receiving the second network port packet data signal from the first remote device; and

sending a sixth network port packet data signal to the second remote device including a busy signal and an address of the first remote device on the network connection.

32. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 30, wherein receiving the first signal comprises receiving a local port pin data signal.

33. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 30, wherein the status information of the first remote device includes one or more of a busy status, an ink level, a paper level, a print head temperature, and a toner level.